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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 JAKARTA 003898

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: MEETINGS WITH EAST KALIMANTAN SECURITY OFFICIALS

REF: A. 2006 JAKARTA 1454 BUILDING AN SEA CT STRATEGY  
[1](#)B. 2005 JAKARTA 16218 JOINT PROPOSAL FOR PROMOTING  
SEA CT  
[1](#)C. 2003 JAKARTA 00642 THE CASE AGAINST ABU BAKAR  
BA'ASYIR

Classified By: David R. Willis for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Our March 1-5 visit to East Kalimantan province found security officials aware of the terrorist transit threat along the Sabah border, but meager resources prevented officials from implementing effective security measures. Lack of GOI investment in securing this area -- despite a longstanding transit problem -- contrasts with official acknowledgement at the Presidential level of the presence of a terror threat in the region. Local officials expressed interest in increasing their border control capacities and identified several existing efforts to improve interagency and cross-border cooperation. Our visit came ahead of a U.S. sponsored 15-day bilateral maritime counterterrorism exercise in the Sulawesi Sea, arranged by the Embassy's Office of Defense Cooperation and the Special Operations Command - Pacific (SOC PAC). Local police and immigration officials welcomed the exercise and showed great interest in future training that incorporated both military and non-military security forces. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) East Kalimantan, Indonesia's second largest province, covers roughly 80,000 square miles, bordering the Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo. Its densely-forested inland borders are remote and largely inaccessible, but terrorist and criminal networks have exploited its loosely-controlled northeastern coastal border with Sabah. The Sulawesi Sea region was identified in January by regional Chiefs of Mission as an area of particular concern. (Ref A, B)

Terror Threat Mostly a Transit Issue, For Now  
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[1](#)3. (SBU) The local police and immigration officials with whom we met, particularly those closest to the border, acknowledged both the seriousness and the regional nature of the security threats emanating from this border area. Over the last few months, police and immigration officials have arrested several Indonesians arriving via ferry from Tawau, Sabah, attempting to smuggle large quantities of detonators, caps, and detonator cord. Though investigators have not identified a clear terrorist connection, the incidents highlight the urgent need for increased land and maritime border controls in the Sulawesi Sea area.

14. (SBU) At East Kalimantan police headquarters in Balikpapan, Operational Bureau Chief N. Sutisna told us that terrorism had thus far remained a border transit issue for them and that there was little indication of radical or terrorist activity among their own residents, referring to the arrests of terrorists connected to the 2002 Bali bombing as an anomaly (Ref C). (Note: In January 2003, Indonesian police arrested Ali Imron, Mubarok, and 12 others on remote Berukang Island, off the coast of East Kalimantan, where they had fled to avoid capture after the 2002 Bali attacks. Both Ali Imron and Mubarok were later given life sentences for their involvement in the 2002 attacks.)

15. (SBU) Although they have not seen signs of terrorist targeting in East Kalimantan, Sutisna said provincial police feared terrorists may eventually look to disrupt the province's economically-important natural resource extraction joint ventures with foreign companies. Most of these operations are located in the southern half of the province, with relatively little economic activity, aside from illegal logging, in the northern border area.

#### Few Resources Available to Boost Border Security

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16. (SBU) Throughout our visit, police officials expressed eagerness to better monitor and combat terrorist and criminal transit of their areas, but said their scant resources were insufficient to effectively secure the border area. Sutisna told us the majority of the province's 8,000 police officers were focused on criminal cases in the main population centers, adding that increased narcotics usage among the 2.5 million residents had caused a jump in theft and violent

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crime. In separate meetings, police chiefs in the northern districts of Tarakan and Nunukan confirmed increased criminal case loads and told us they were barely equipped to handle routine duties. Although Maritime Police units, which report to provincial police headquarters in Balikpapan, were posted in both Tarakan and Nunukan, the police chiefs there told us the small maritime units offered little overall assistance in patrolling the official piers, the numerous private piers, and the hundreds of informal coastal access points used by fisherman and other locals.

17. (SBU) Just two-and-a-half hours by boat from the Sabah border, the island of Tarakan (pop. 170,000) hosts two weekly flights and daily ferries from Tawau, as well as national passenger ships (PELNI) and domestic flights from elsewhere in the archipelago that bring a steady transit population. District Police Chief Hariyanto expressed concern that a province of North Kalimantan may be created in 2007 with Tarakan as its capital, prompting an influx of residents that would further stretch the resources of his 200 police officers. In our discussion, Hariyanto identified the following Tarakan police assets:

- 2 patrol cars
- 2 small covered pick-ups (approx. six person capacity)
- 6 small motorcycles (approx. 100 cc each)
- 2 small boats (50 hp and 75 hp; approx. 10-15 years old)
- 1 small boat (50 hp) operated by a Maritime Police unit

18. (SBU) In Nunukan, directly adjacent to the Malaysian border, Police Chief Tajudin told us his district stretched from Sebatik Island in the East to the densely forested and sparsely populated Sarawak border to the West. Nunukan's two official piers host daily Tawau ferries; though Tajudin admitted the border could be crossed with relative ease using the many maritime channels. He said he focused his 350 officers on the islands of Nunukan (pop. 90,000) and Sebatik (pop. 20,000). INP maintains on the mainland a 28-person office in Sebuku and a 15-person office in Lumbis to handle illegal logging issues along the land border with Sabah. During our visit, we observed little economic development on

Nunukan Island, and police officials confirmed that hundreds of the island's residents commuted to work in Tawau. While at the district police office, the Nunukan police intelligence officer showed us the caps and detonator cord they recently had confiscated from two passengers arriving via the Tawau ferry. The caps were in small green boxes, wrapped in plastic, and taped together uniformly into bricks. The cord was red and in an 18-20 inch diameter bundle in a large sport-style duffel bag. In our discussion, Tajudin identified the following Nunukan police assets:

- 3 patrol cars (2 on Nunukan, 1 on Sebatik)
- 20 small motorcycles (approx. 100 cc each)
- 1 small boat (40 hp; approx. 10-15 years old)
- 1 small boat (200 hp) operated by a Maritime Police unit
- 1 small boat (80 hp; circa 1985) operated by Immigration

19. (SBU) In separate meetings, Tarakan's Acting Immigration Chief Adnan Badwi and Nunukan Immigration Chief Ade Dachlan echoed the eagerness of the police to improve security at the official ports and to monitor other access points, but said the 30 immigration officers in Tarakan and the 70 immigration officers in Nunukan lacked the equipment. Badwi, Dachlan, and Balikpapan Immigration Chief Tony Sinaga each told us that residents within 20-30 kilometers of the Indonesia-Malaysia border were allowed to cross the border using a special resident's pass (Pas Lintas Batas), which allowed them access to the same 20-30 kilometer area on the opposite side of the border. They acknowledged these passes were easily forged and difficult to authenticate. Passports were required for all others seeking to cross the border. Both Badwi and Dachlan said they maintained immigration posts at the Tawau ferry piers, though they did not have any security equipment, such as x-ray machines, metal detectors, or hand-held magnetometers, to check passengers and baggage. Dachlan told us he had redesigned the Tawau ferry arrival point to channel passengers to immigration, but said he lacked the support to maintain the perimeter, and passengers were frequently able to avert the checkpoint. Dachlan also said he met in September 2005 with local Indonesian military leaders and Nunukan police to discuss the problem and watch video footage taken by Dachlan of the pier and other problematic areas. A second meeting was expected in late March or April. Badwi sounded a more optimistic tone in

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Tarakan, where he told us biometric passport equipment from Jakarta was being installed and that his immigration post at the ferry pier actively used a laptop with a photo-capable immigration database. He said the database -- updated with watch list information from Jakarta -- was compared against passenger lists and immigration forms received from the Tawau ferries. During visits to Tarakan and Nunukan piers, we observed open, unguarded, or lightly guarded, gates and no checkpoints or security equipment.

#### Existing Cross-border Security Cooperation

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10. (C) In response to questions about cross-border security cooperation, we were told that regulatory differences between Malaysia and Indonesia on issues like illegal logging inhibited better cooperation, but officials went on to reveal a surprising number of existing efforts to boost cross-border interaction. Police officials also told us that a January letter from INP Chief Sutanto specifically urged provincial and district police chiefs to increase cooperation with their Malaysian counterparts. Officials in Nunukan said they knew the names and phone numbers of their counterparts across the border, though both sides prefer using the official local liaison officer located in both Tarakan and Nunukan. As an example of successful cooperation, the officials told us the arrests in recent months of explosives smugglers on the Tawau ferry resulted from Malaysian information that was communicated directly to Nunukan officials. Local officials identified several joint programs:

- Annual Bilateral Exercise: Indonesian National Police and the Royal Malaysian Police meet annually for the longstanding "Aman Malindo" joint police exercise. The 24th exercise was held in December 2005 in Pontianak, West Kalimantan, and officials said one of the next exercises would likely be held in Nunukan.

- Biannual Provincial Coordination: East Kalimantan Provincial Police (POLDA KALTIM) and Sabah's Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM Kontinjen Sabah) held a biannual coordination meeting in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, on December 1-4, 2005. Officials said meetings in 2006 are planned for June/July in Balikpapan, and for October/November in Kota Kinabalu.

- Monthly Provincial Level Joint Patrols: East Kalimantan Provincial Police (POLDA KALTIM) and Sabah's Royal Malaysian Police (PDRM Kontinjen Sabah and Briged Sabah Malaysia) join with maritime police elements to jointly patrol the land and maritime border on and around Sebatik Island. Officials said the joint patrol takes place on the 15th of every month, and has been in place since approximately 2000.

- Aperiodic Provincial Coordination: East Kalimantan and North Sulawesi provincial police met with their Mindanao, Philippine counterparts in Manado in January 2006. Additional meetings may have been previously held in, or are planned for, Davao City and/or General Santos City, Philippines.

- Quarterly Sub-provincial Coordination: Tarakan and Nunukan police district leaders meet once every three months with their counterparts from Tawau and Keningau to discuss coordination. Venue alternates.

- Aperiodic Subprovincial Coordination: Immigration chiefs from Nunukan and Tarakan meet informally with their counterparts in Tawau several times per year. Venue alternates.

#### Indonesian Navy Welcomes Bilateral CT Exercises

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¶11. (SBU) Our visit came ahead of a U.S.-sponsored 15-day bilateral maritime counterterrorism exercise in the Sulawesi Sea, arranged by the Embassy's Office of Defense Cooperation and the Special Operations Command - Pacific (SOCPAC). The exercise, involving a U.S. Navy MK V Special Operations Detachment and the Indonesian Navy CT Unit (KOPASKA), included both classroom and field components conducted in Tarakan and in Bitung, North Sulawesi province. Openness by Indonesian military leaders in Jakarta to future joint training in the Sulawesi Sea area was echoed in our meetings with the head of the Indonesian Navy detachment in Tarakan, Lieutenant Colonel Ibnu Parna. Ibnu genuinely seemed to

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welcome the interaction with U.S. forces and directed his officers to work closely with the U.S. Navy advance team to prepare classroom facilities and the Tarakan pier for the arrival of the U.S. Navy Mark V boats from the southern Philippines. In our meetings, local police and immigration officials also welcomed the mil-mil exercise and expressed great interest in possible future training that incorporated both military and non-military security forces.

¶12. (SBU) Although he generally appeared less conversant than local law enforcement officials on border security issues, Ibnu told us that one of the largest transit threats was posed by 'illegals' hitching rides across the border with illegal fisherman and loggers. His area of responsibility includes the coastal regencies of Tarakan, Malinao, Bulungan, and Berau. He said he currently has seven patrol boats to cover a coastline approximately 250 miles long and 8 miles wide that includes an estimated 25 official ports and hundreds of private piers and coastal access points. When

asked about cooperation with his Malaysian counterparts, Ibnu said he was not aware of any efforts along the East Kalimantan-Sabah maritime area.

Comment

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¶13. (C) East Kalimantan security officials made all the right noises regarding the border security threat and seemed genuinely interested in improving their coverage if the appropriate equipment and training were available. The still poorly-regulated coastal border with Sabah, despite a decades-old terrorist and criminal transit problem, has been mentioned several times by President Yudhoyono in meetings with USG visitors. He has cited East Kalimantan as a nexus needing joint attention with the Philippines and Malaysia. The current lack of resources to control traffic effectively at the province's official ports invites terrorist and criminal activity, as seen in the use of public ferries for cross-border explosives smuggling. Monitoring the hundreds of informal coastal access points near the border presents an even greater challenge. Our visit confirmed the utility of the U.S.-sponsored border control needs analysis suggested by Chiefs of Mission at the January CT meeting in Jakarta. In contrast to the border transit problem, we found the general atmosphere in both Tarakan and Nunukan to be quiet and subdued. Extensive interaction during our visit with local residents was friendly and non-threatening.

PASCOE